TRAVELER'S BRIEFING

ESTONIA

(Eesti Vabariik)

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BACKGROUND

Full Name: Republic of Estonia

Capital: Talinn

Population: 1,408,523 (est)

Type of government: Parliamentary Dem

Head of government: PM Mart Siimann

Official language(s) Estonian

Economy: Free market economy

Religions: Evangelical Lutheran (40%), Russian Orthodox (25%), Estonian Ortho

TRAVEL

Travel restrictions: None

International Airport: Tallinn

Flights from Frankfurt: Estonian Air

Other methods of arrival: Ship/road/rail

U.S. Embassy address: Kentmanni 20, Tallinn.
Tel: 372-6-312-021; FAX: 372-6-312-025

Transportation: Public transportation: Poor.

Urban Roads/Maintenance: Fair.

Rural roads/Maintenance: Fair.

Availability of roadside assistance: Poor. Aggressive driving is the norm and many roads are not up to Western standards. Wild animals and icy road conditions can create unexpected hazards. Driving at nightcan be particularly risky. Americans planning to drive in Estonia should obtain an international

ENTRY/EXIT

Travel Necessities: Military personnel on leave require Country clearance from the USDAO in Tallinn. Passports are required. For official travel, a no-fee passport is required. Visas are not required for US citizens staying less than 90 days. Stays of 90 days or more require a visa.

Customs, immigration, and quarantine inspection is required.

Duty-free entry for used personal effects.

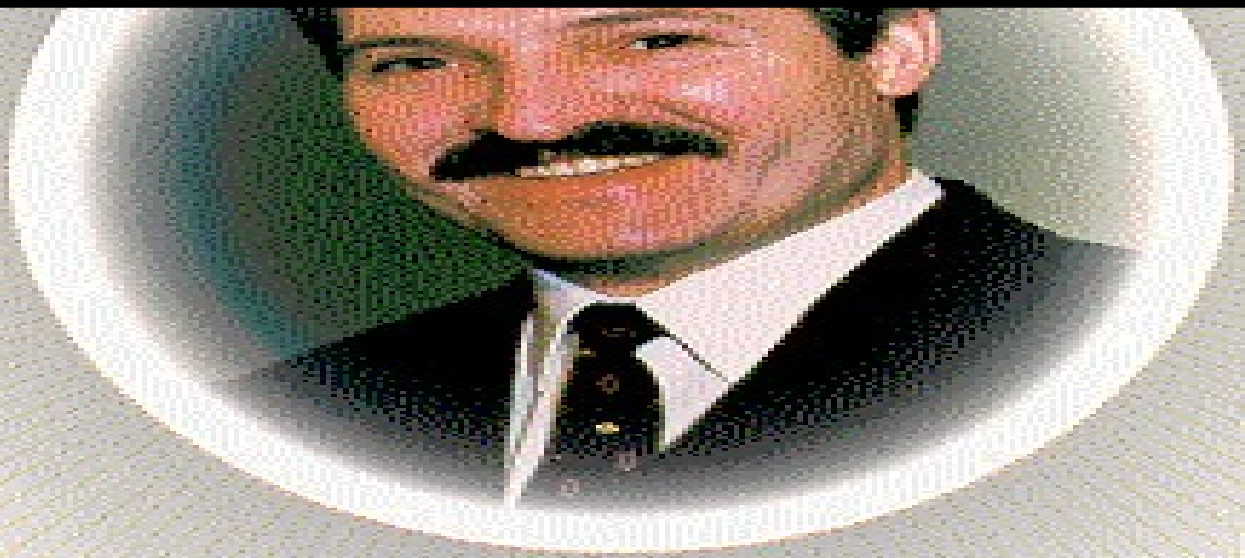
HELPFUL HINTS

Special restrictions: Estonia is a rapidly developing nation that has experienced significant success in reforming its political and economic institutions since regaining independence in 1991. Tourist facilities are generally good though some amenities may be lacking in rural areas. Some goods and services may not be available outside of major cities.All personnel are encouraged to register with Amembassy in Tallinn. Military personnel on leave require passports. A visa is not required for stays of 90 days or less. Stays of more than 90 days require a resident permit obtained before arrival. Travelers planning to enter Russia or any of the other former Soviet Republics, except Ukraine, must obtain Russian visas prior to travel.

Amembassy operating hours are 0830-1730 Mon-Fri. Amembassy observes US and local holidays. It provides limited consular and emergency services to US citizens.

MONEY

Currency restrictions: Declare all currency. The Estonian crown (kroon) is the only currency. Credit cards and travelers checks can be used at major hotels, restaurants, and banks.



Rate: Approximate: 16.36 Estonian Kroon for $1.

HEALTH

Major threats: diarrhea, respiratory diseases, accidents, arthropod-borne diseases, STDs, cold injuries, and industrial

Availability of medical services: Fair. The quality of medical care in Estonia is improving, but it still falls short of Western standards. Estonia has many highly trained medical professionals, but hospitals and clinics still suffer from a lack

Medical Insurance: May not apply in Estonia.

Status of hospitals: Good.

Health Precautions: Cases of resistant strains of tuberculosis have been reported in Estonia. Also, visitors to forest areas in warm weather should guard against tick-borne encephalitis.

Immunizations: Hep A (recommended), Hep B (recommended), TB (recommended) MMR (recommended) and tetanus-disptheria boosters (recommended). Foreigners seeking residency or work permits require an HIV test. HIV

FORCE PROTECTION

Country Clearance: Required for all military personnel traveling to Estonia. You obtain this by going through your S3/G3 section. This must be done at least 30 days ahead of scheduled visit. DV visits will also be coordinated through G3/S3 channels.
Briefings: AT/FP level I brief from command's Level II trainer or equivalent.

CRIME

Criminal Activities: Travelers in Estonia should exercise the same precautions with regard to their personal safety and belongings they would take in major U.S. cities. The most common crimes encountered by foreign tourists are purse snatching, pickpocketing and mugging. Violent crime, though rarely directed against foreigners, does occur. Intoxicated people leaving bars alone or in small groups late at night are a favorite target for muggings, which can turn violent. In several instances, foreign visitors have been befriended by well-dressed criminals who offer their unwary victims drinks laced with a powerful sedative, then rob them while they sleep. Car thefts are common and can occur in daylight. Police capabilities in Estonia are improving but still suffer from lack of equipment, training, personnel and resources. Few police officers speak English. Credit card fraud is on the rise.

Estonia is strict on: Drugs. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Estonia are strict and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines.

WEATHER

http://cnn

CLOTHING

Uniform restrictions: Civilian clothes will be worn. Fall and winter weight clothing is worn throughout the year. Winters are very cold and woolens are recommended.

This concludes the TRAVELER'S BRIEFING for

ESTONIA